

***Wilson Pleased to Announce that Eligible Veterans Able to Apply Online***

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Our country's newest veterans who are eligible for education benefits under the new Webb-Mitchell GI Bill are able to apply for benefits through the Department of Veterans Affairs online beginning Friday, May 1. Members of the military who have served on active duty since September 11, 2001, including activated reservists and members of the National Guard, are qualified to receive up to four academic years of education benefits, including stipends for housing and books.

"Our veterans have earned this benefit," Congressman Charlie Wilson (OH-6) said. "With education prices continuing to skyrocket, we had to update the old GI Bill to ensure that our returning veterans have the right educational opportunities."

Congress passed the Webb-Mitchell GI Bill in 2008 and it was signed into law at the end of June 2008.

"The old program paid only about 70-percent of a public college education and 30-percent of a private college education for these veterans," Wilson said. "The expanded GI Bill restores full, four-year college scholarships to veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars to help make them part of our economic recovery, just like the veterans of World War II helped the United States recover after the War."

The legislation also allows veterans to transfer those benefits to family members. Under the new law the following benefits apply:

- Service members, including those returning from Iraq or Afghanistan, can receive up to 36 months of education benefits, including stipends for housing and books.
- Veterans would have up to 15 years after they leave active duty to use their education benefits.
- Veterans would have the ability to use their benefits for program fees, tuition, books and housing.
- Veterans would be able to use the Yellow Ribbon G.I. Education Enhancement Program, in which the federal government will match, dollar for dollar, any voluntary additional contributions to veterans from institutions whose tuition is more expensive than the maximum educational assistance provided under the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill.
- Benefits are applicable for apprenticeships, vocational schools, and other non-traditional post-secondary educational settings.

Applicants can now apply through an online form at <http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-22-1990-ARE.pdf> . Payments will be processed beginning August 1.